CLAIMS

1.   (Amended)

An image creating apparatus, comprising:

an input section that inputs various information;

a display section that displays the various information;

a material data storage section that stores material data for creating computer graphics;

a text string/material correspondence table in which the material data is associated with a set of material names for the material data;

a hierarchical structural description that describes a feature of the material data in a hierarchical structure;

a search section that, when the feature is input from the input section, searches for material data corresponding to the feature using the hierarchical structural description;

a registration section that stores the searched material data in the material data storage section and registers the searched material data and a material name of the material data with the text string/material correspondence table; and

a text string/CG conversion processing section that, when a text to designate the material name is input

to a input screen, refers to the text string/material correspondence table, searches for a material name, with which the input text partially matches, acquires material data corresponding to the material name, and

5   creates the computer graphics using the acquired material data.

2.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, when the feature is input, the search section

10   refers to the hierarchical structural description, searches for a feature of a lower hierarchy than the input feature, and searches for material data corresponding to the searched feature of the lower hierarchy.

15   3.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, when the feature is input, the search section refers to the hierarchical structural description, searches for a feature of a higher hierarchy than the input feature, and searches for material data

20   corresponding to the searched feature of the higher hierarchy.

4.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a display control section that

25   displays a list of the searched feature in the display section, wherein, when a feature is selected from the

list, the search section searches for material data for the selected feature.

5.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the display control section displays a list of thumbnails of the material data for the feature selected from the list.

6.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the display control section displays a predetermined number of features.

7.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the feature is defined by an attribute and a value of the attribute.

8.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:

the hierarchical structural description describes the feature related to the material data stored on a network;

the search section searches for the material data stored on the network; and

the registration section registers the material data stored on the network.

9.   (Cancelled)

10.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein:

5   the material name is further associated with an
expression adjective which indicates an expression;

          the text string/CG conversion processing section,
when a text which designates the expression adjective
is input, searches for the expression adjective with
10   which the input text partially matches; and

          the display control section displays the
expression adjective.

11.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,
15   wherein:

          the material name is further associated with an
expression adverb which indicates an expression;

          the text string/CG conversion processing section,
when a text which designates the expression adverb is
20   input,   searches for the expression adverb with which the
input text partially matches; and

          the display control section displays the
expression adverb.

25   12.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,
wherein:

the material data comprises at least one of action data, character data, object data, and set data;

the material name comprises an action name, a character name, an object name, and a set name corresponding to the action data, the character data, the object data, and the set data, respectively; and

the text string/material correspondence table comprises a text string/action correspondence table, a text string/character correspondence table, a text string/set correspondence table, and a text string/set correspondence table corresponding to the action data, the character data, the object data, and the set data, respectively.

13. The image creating apparatus according to claim 12, wherein:

the action name is associated with the character data; and

the text string/CG conversion processing section searches for the action name corresponding to a selected character data.

14. The image creating apparatus according to claim 12, wherein:

the action data comprises an object; and

the text string/CG conversion processing section,

when an object name to indicate an object which the action
data comprises is input, acquires object data
corresponding to the input object name and creates the
computer graphics using the acquired object data.

15.   The image creating apparatus according to claim 14,
wherein the text string/CG conversion processing section,
when a text which designates an object name to indicate
an object which the action name comprises is input,
refers to the text string/set correspondence table and
searches for the object name with which the input text
partially matches.

16.   (Amended)
An image creating method, comprising the steps of:
providing a text string/material correspondence
table in which material data for creating computer
graphics is associated with a set of material names of
the material data;
providing a hierarchical structural description
which describes a feature of the material data in a
hierarchical structure;
searching for material data corresponding to the
feature by using the hierarchical structural description
when the feature is input;
storing the searched material data;

registering the searched material data and the material name of the searched material data with the text string/material correspondence table; and

referring to the text string/material conversion

5   table when a text to indicate the material name is input in an input screen, searching for a material name with which the input text partially matches, acquiring material data corresponding to the material name, and creating the computer graphics by using the acquired

10   material data.